

THE EGYPTIAN INTEREST IN MYCENAEAN GREECE¹

JORRIT M. KELDER

Introduction

Connections between Egypt and the Mycenaean world have often been understood in terms of indirect exchange, via middlemen on Cyprus and in the Levant. This view is mainly informed by the relative paucity of Mycenaean pottery found in Egypt, especially when compared to the large amounts of Mycenaean pottery found on Cyprus and the Levant. It will be argued in this article that connections between Egypt and Mycenae were of direct, diplomatic nature and that various different missions can be identified over the course of the 15th to 13th centuries BC. To that purpose, the article presents a range of archaeological, iconographical and textual evidence coming both from Egypt and the Mycenaean world.

Egyptian Attestations of the Mycenaean World

The Mycenaean world appears only sporadically in the Egyptian record. The earliest reference to the Mycenaean world is a passage in the Annals of Thutmose III (ca. 1479-1425 BC) referring to a campaign in Syria during the King's 42nd regnal year (ca. 1437 BC). While on campaign, the King was visited by messengers sent by the King of the land *Tnj* (usually vocalized as Tanaju), bringing him what could arguably best be described as “greeting gifts” to initiate diplomatic relations.² According to the Annals, these gifts included a silver jug in “Keftiu”-style and three copper cups, fitted with iron handles. The Annals do not refer to the geographical whereabouts of Tanaju, although the reference to a jug in “Keftiu”-style may suggest an Aegean origin (since Keftiu is a known Egyptian designation for Crete).³

That Tanaju was indeed situated in the Aegean is confirmed in a later text, dating to the reign of Amenhotep III (ca. 1382-1344 BC). This text, a long list of states describing the

¹ It is my pleasure to thank Calie Sharman and Brent Davis for proofreading the text. I thank Jacke Phillips for valuable information and stimulating conversations and Maarten Raven for his corrections, comments and patience. I am indebted to Amalia Kakissis for help at the Archive of the British School at Athens, and to the Director and staff of the British School for allowing me to consult material from the BSA archive. The research could not have been conducted without the financial support of the “Stichting Philologisch Studiefonds Utrecht” and my good friends Tijs Mul, Friso Homan and Take Wiegersma.

² The text referring to Tanaju is unfortunately damaged. The reconstruction of ‘King of Tanaju’ is, as a consequence, not without problems. It could also be argued that the text, in fact, refers to several Kings of Tanaju, which would be more consistent with the current archaeological paradigm of a fragmented political landscape in Mycenaean Greece, with various independent (yet culturally virtually identical) polities. I have argued against such a concept (cf. J. M. Kelder, “A Great King at Mycenae”, in *Palamedes, a Journal of Ancient History* 3, 2008, 49-74) on the grounds of both archaeological and textual evidence. Additionally, since other (undamaged) sections of Thutmose's Annals generally list a single King for every single polity, there is little reason to expect otherwise in the case of Tanaju.

³ Cf. J. Phillips, “Egypt and the Aegean”, in *Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology* [in preparation].

world then known to the Egyptians, is incised on the bases of colossal statues in Amenhotep III's mortuary temple at present-day Kom el Hetan. On one of these bases, Tanaju is listed immediately following Keftiu, i.e. Crete, which, considering the grouping of other (known) states in the list appears to suggest that Tanaju lay in roughly the same direction as Keftiu, although further. That Tanaju is the last entry in the list (despite the fact that there is sufficient space on the base for additional names) suggests that Tanaju constituted the very edge of the world known to the Egyptians.⁴ Whilst its grouping with Keftiu already indicates that Tanaju must be situated in the Aegean, evidence for its exact position is provided in a second column, listing the cities and principal regions of Keftiu and Tanaju. Although a number of these have not been conclusively identified, the identifications of Mycenae and Nauplion, as well as Kythera, Messenia and the Thebaid (notably the region around Thebes, but not Thebes itself) have been widely accepted.

Although it has been proposed that Tanaju may have been located in Cilicia, its position in the Kom el Hetan list, as well as the identification of a number of important Mycenaean centres and regions within Tanaju, rule out any alternative identification other than with the Greek mainland. As a result, the Kom el Hetan text and the Annals of Thutmose III are complementary: the Kom el Hetan text proves that Tanaju must be equated with a significant part of mainland Greece, whilst the passage in Thutmose's Annals indicates that Tanaju was headed by a King, and therefore was perceived (by the Egyptians at least) as a unified state.

Tanaju is known from various other Egyptian texts dated to the reign of Amenhotep III, and a number dating to the reign of Ramesses II (ca. 1279-1213 BC). In general, the Rameside texts are considered to be copies of the earlier texts, and therefore do not necessarily reflect contemporary geographical and political reality. From the reign of Merneptah (ca. 1213-1203 BC) onwards, the Ekwesh are mentioned as one of the "Sea Peoples", whereas the Denyen appear in Egyptian texts during the reign of Ramesses III (ca. 1184-1153 BC). It has been proposed that Ekwesh may relate to "Achaea" (compare Hittite Ahhiyawa), whereas Denyen may relate to Tanaju and Classical Greek "Danaoi" (and as such also to the biblical tribe of Dan), but regardless of such details it is clear that these texts deal with people, rather than with a state. Reliable references to the Mycenaean Greek mainland in the Egyptian record thus appear to be confined to the reigns of Thutmose III and Amenhotep III.

Apart from textual evidence, the Mycenaean world is prominent in the Egyptian archaeological record. Most conspicuous are a number of relatively large corpora of Mycenaean pottery, of which the corpus at the Middle Egyptian site of El Amarna is the largest (see below). At that same site, the Mycenaeans also appear in Egyptian iconography: on fragmentary pieces of papyrus.

Mycenaeans on a papyrus at Amarna

The papyrus fragments were found in December 1936 by John Pendlebury, in a house (R43.2) on the eastern edge of the Central City at El Amarna, in association with (the remains of) a wooden shrine, various cultic items, a complete Mycenaean vase, and an inscription mentioning the "great statue which the King caused to be made".⁵ It is likely that the build-

⁴ Cf. C. Vandersleyen, "Keftiu = Crète? Objections Préliminaires", in *Göttinger Miszellen* 188 (2002), 10; Phillips 2008, for extensive discussion and references on the identification of Keftiu – Crete.

⁵ J. D. S. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhenaten III*, London 1951, 140-1; L. Schofield / R. B. Parkinson, *Mycenaean Warriors on a Papyrus from El-Amarna*, BSA 89 (1994), 159-160.

ing served as a chapel for the divine King (Amenhotep III or Akhenaten) and that the artefacts found inside the building played some role in that context.

Although the papyrus survived only in fragments, it appears to have been purely pictorial papyrus, depicting a battle between Egyptians and Libyan warriors. Coming to the aid of the Egyptians are a number of warriors who, while wearing typical Egyptian white kilts, are equipped with helmets and various types of what may plausibly be argued to represent leather armour. Both the helmets and the two identifiable types of armour are not present elsewhere in the Egyptian iconographical record, and seem to identify a people other than those usually depicted in Egyptian paintings. It has been forcefully argued that the helmets depicted on the papyrus should be identified as boar's tusk helmets and that the armour worn by the warriors has close parallels with known Aegean types of armour. As a result, the warriors depicted on the papyrus most likely represent Mycenaeans, apparently in the service of the Pharaoh.⁶ This identification is strengthened by the find of a piece of boar's tusk, with perforations for attaching it to a leather frame, during excavations at Qantir, the site of the Ramesside capital Pi-ramesse in the eastern delta. It appears likely that this piece was part of the famous boar's tusk helmets worn by the Mycenaean elite.⁷ The thought of foreigners in the Egyptian military is not wholly hypothetical: Egyptian Kings from the Middle Kingdom onwards used Nubian archers in their armies, whereas during Ramesside times defeated Sea Peoples were incorporated in the Egyptian army.

Much more circumstantial evidence for strong connections between the Egyptian court and the Mycenaean world may be seen in the depictions of what have been identified as four sets of Aegean silver earrings, worn by the Great Wife of Ramesses II, Nefertiti, in her tomb in the valley of the Queens.⁸ It has been suggested that these had been brought to the Egyptian court as greeting gift on the occasion of the accession of Ramesses II to the throne of Egypt. To be sure, contact between the Egyptian court and the Aegean went back to at least the early Kings of the 18th dynasty: it has been suggested that Ahotep, the mother of Kamose and Ahmose, was of Cretan-Minoan birth, whereas Minoan style frescos in a palace at early 18th dynasty Avaris (later re-founded as Pi-ramesse) and textual references to shipwrights building Keftiu-ships at the harbour town of Perunefer suggest that at least some Minoans settled in Egypt.⁹ The well-known wall-paintings of messengers from Keftiu bringing greeting gifts to the Egyptian Pharaoh in the tombs of the nobles at Egyptian Thebes indicate that there

⁶ Cf. L. Schofield / R. B. Parkinson, *Mycenaean Warriors on a Papyrus from El-Amarna*, BSA 89 (1994), 157-170; L. Schofield / R. B. Parkinson, "Images of Mycenaeans, a recently acquired Papyrus from El-Amarna", in W. V. Davies / L. Schofield (eds.), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant*, London, 1995, 125.

⁷ E. Pusch, "Ausländisches Kulturgut in Qantir-Piramesse", in S. Schoske (ed.), *Akten des 4. Internationalen Ägyptologenkongresses II*, München, 1985, 254.

⁸ R. B. Koehl, "The Creto-Mycenaean Earrings of Queen Nofretari", in P. P. Betancourt / V. Karageorghis / R. Laffineur / W-D. Niemeier (eds.), *Meletemata* [Aegaeum 20], Liège, 1999, 424.

⁹ Cf. V. Hankey, "The Whirligig of Time: The Aegean and Egypt in the Second Millenium B.C.", in A. Leahy / J. Tait (eds.), *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H.S. Smith*, London, 1999; P. Jánosi, "The Queens Ahhotep I & II and Egypt's Foreign Relations", *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum* 5 (1992), 100, 105; M. Bietak, "Le début de la XVIIIe dynastie et les Minoëns à Avaris", in *Bulletin de la Société française d'Égyptologie* 135 (1996), 22-24 on the Cretan connections of the early 18th dynasty; P. Haider, "Ägäer in ägyptischen Diensten zwischen ca. 1550 und 1200 v.Chr.", *Laverna* 1 (1990), 19-22; P. Haider, "Menschenhandel zwischen dem ägyptischen Hof und der minoisch-mykenischen Welt?", *Ägypten und Levante* 6 (1996), 144-5 for Cretans living at Perunefer; M. Bietak, "The Thutmose Stronghold of Perunefer", *Egyptian Archaeology* 26 (2005), 13-27 for the identification of Peru-nefer as the harbor town of Avaris (rather than Memphis).

was regular diplomatic contact between Crete and Egypt during the reigns of Hatshepsut and Thutmose III, and the first years of Amenhotep II, who reigned from ca. 1427 to 1392 BC.¹⁰ There seems to be no evidence for Aegean connections between the Aegean and Egypt during the 10-year reign of Thutmose IV (ca. 1392-1382 BC), and although Aegean influence in the wall-paintings of Amenhotep III's palace at Malqata, as well as the depiction of two Minoan fan bearers on a relief from Amarna¹¹ suggest continued contact between Egypt and the Aegean, there are indications that the role of Crete in these connections became increasingly eclipsed by the rise of Mycenae. The few pieces of LH IIB / LM II pottery (an Aegean pottery style that is roughly contemporary with the period from the later years of Thutmose III until the very end of the reign of Thutmose IV) that have been found in Egypt appear to have come from the Greek mainland rather than Crete.¹² Around the same time, archaeology suggests the take-over of the hitherto Minoan settlement of Miletus on the Anatolian west coast by Mycenaean military incursions north of Miletus in a contemporary Hittite text.¹³ The overall impression is one of Minoan collapse and Mycenaean rise. It is, perhaps, in this light that we should consider a number of rare faience plaques, found at the citadel of Mycenae.

Amenhotep III and Mycenae

Excavations at Mycenae have uncovered various fragments of faience plaques, bearing (various parts of) the name of the Egyptian King Amenhotep III. Recent studies indicate that the fragments represent at least 11 plaques, found in various deposits on the slope of the citadel. The faience fragments are generally named after their excavators, respectively Chr. Tsountas, G. E. Mylonas and Lord W. Taylour (Tsountas 1-7, Mylonas 1a-2, Taylour 1-2).¹⁴ None of the published plaques have been found in a context contemporary with

¹⁰ S. Wachsmann, *Aegeans in the Theban Tombs*, Leuven, 1987, 122 ff.

¹¹ Cf. A. P. Kozloff, "A New Interpretation of an Old Amarna Enigma", *AJA* 81 (1977), 101-103; P. Haider, "Menschenhandel zwischen dem ägyptischen Hof und der minoisch-mykenischen Welt?", *Ägypten und Levante* 6 (1996), 146, fig. 7.

¹² For dating LH IIB / LM II, see P. Warren / V. Hankey, *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology*, Bristol, 1989, 146; see V. Hankey / A. Leonard jr., "Aegean LH I-II Pottery in the east: Who is the Potter, Pray, and who the Pot?", in E. Cline / D. Harris-Cline (eds.), *The Aegean and the Orient in the second Millennium BC*. [Aegaeum 18], Liège, 1998, 35-6.

¹³ Cf. W-D. Niemeier, "Hattusa und Ahhijawa im Konflikt um Millawanda/Milet", in H. Willinghofer / U. Hasekamp (eds.), *Die Hethiter und ihr Reich; das Volk der 1000 Götter*, Stuttgart, 2002, 295; for KUB XIV 1 (the Indictment of Madduwatta) see A. Götzke, *Madduwattas*, Darmstadt, 1986; see J. Kelder, "The Chariots of Ahhiyawa", *Dacia* XLVIII-XLIX (2004-5), 152 ff. on Mycenaean activity evidenced in Hittite sources.

¹⁴ Mylonas 2 is a recent addition, found in the storerooms of the excavation at Mycenae, and was most probably found during excavations and cleaning operations at the "Cult Centre" in the 1970's. Cf. J. Phillips, "The Amenhotep III 'Plaques' from Mycenae: Comparison, Contrast and a Question of Chronology", in M. Bietak / E. Czerny (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC*, III, Wien, 2007, 481-2; see J. Phillips / E. Cline, "Amenhotep III and Mycenae: New Evidence", in A. Dakouri-Hild / S. Sherratt (eds.), *Autochthon, Papers presented to O.T.P.K. Dickinson on the Occasion of his Retirement* [BAR int.ser. 1432], Oxford, 2005, 317-328, for the newly found Mylonas fragment. Recent excavations at Mycenae, directed by Kim Shelton, have yielded another fragment of a faience plaque. The plaque was found in a well at the Petsas House, in an LH IIIA context (AR 2005-6, 33; the reference to a LH IIIB2 context appears to be wrong [personal communication Jacke Phillips, 13 April 2008]), and as such represents the first piece found in a stratum more or less contemporary with Amenhotep III. As a result, it can now be safely assumed that the plaques were sent to Mycenae no later than the reign of Akhenaton (contemporary with LH IIIA2).

Amenhotep III, and although it has been proposed that the plaques originally adorned the windowsills of an Egyptian room (an embassy?) on the Mycenaean acropolis, compelling evidence for a single original context on the citadel is lacking. Most of the plaques appear to have been found in fill levels, possibly, but not certainly, originating from the citadel.¹⁵

Similarly unclear are the origins of the plaques. There are no direct comparanda for the plaques, not even in Egypt, although bricks with the royal cartouches of 18th and 19th dynasty Pharaohs have been found as temple / building deposits within Egypt. Those bricks were, however, stamped on only one side — not on both sides, as is the case with the plaques at Mycenae. As a result, it has been proposed that the plaques might not be of Egyptian manufacture, but perhaps of Levantine, or even Mycenaean origin, although the good palaeography of the plaques seems to suggest an Egyptian origin.¹⁶ Regardless of these considerations, the sheer uniqueness of these plaques and their clear reference to Egypt seems to suggest that Egypt was of particular interest to Mycenae's elite. In fact, there is evidence for the reworking of a number of the faience plaques, and at least one of those (a large fragment found by Taylour in a lead alabastron in the "Room of the Fresco") appears to have served some purpose in the Cult Centre, during the later part of the 13th century BC.

Various scenarios have been proposed to explain the presence of the faience plaques at Mycenae. Helck argued for an Egyptian room at the palace, possibly serving as an Embassy.¹⁷ In a similar fashion, Cline argued for intense Egyptian-Mycenaean contacts from the reign of Amenhotep III onwards, with the primary motivation of containing the rise of Hatti on two fronts (Mycenae in western Anatolia and Egypt in Syria).¹⁸ The faience plaques would have been sent originally as greeting gifts (presumably alongside quantities of Egyptian gold), but the eventual use of one of the plaques in some sort of cultic activity at Mycenae, he continued, seemed to suggest some Mycenaean affinity with the original Egyptian ritual connotation of the object — and would therefore imply continuation of strong Egypto-Mycenaean relationships. Vronwy Hankey argued that the plaques were sent to Mycenae by Amenhotep III, and that they were used as a foundation deposit for a shrine on the Mycenaean citadel.¹⁹ In Hankey's scenario, the plaques at Mycenae represented the first act in a diplomatic exchange of messengers and greeting gifts. Following Hankey, the ruler of Mycenae would have reciprocated Amenhotep's gesture and sent a large shipment of Mycenaean pottery back to Egypt. Upon the return of Amenhotep's mission to Egypt, however, the messengers would have been confronted with a change in the situation: the old King, Amenhotep III, had died, and his son, Akhenaten, had moved his court to a new capital in Middle Egypt: Akhetaten. Thus, the messengers would have sailed to Akhetaten, but not after leaving a description of their voyage through the Aegean at their deceased master's mortuary temple at Kom el Hetan.

¹⁵ But see above, note 14, for a new (unpublished) plaque in a LH IIIA2 context. A large fragment was found by Taylour in a crumpled lead alabastron on the LH IIIB (middle) floor of the "Room with the fresco", whereas the two barely joining fragments of Mylonas 1 were found in a LH IIIB (late) deposit next to an internal structure against the north wall of Room 2 (in the north of the citadel). See J. Phillips, *op. cit.*, 482-3.

¹⁶ Cf. J. Phillips, *op. cit.*, 488-9 for extensive discussion and references.

¹⁷ W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens und Vorderasiens zur Ägäis bis ins 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Darmstadt, 1979, 97.

¹⁸ E. Cline, "An unpublished Amenhotep III faience plaque from Mycenae", *JAOS* 110 (1990), 211.

¹⁹ V. Hankey, "The Aegean Interest in El Amarna", *Journal of Mediterranean Anthropology and Archaeology* 1 (1981), 45-6.

The interpretation of the plaques at Mycenae as foundation deposit for a shrine appears plausible, despite the fact that there is no evidence that a shrine on the citadel ever existed before LH IIIB, if only because of similar practice in Egypt and the later use of one of the plaques in a cultic context. But whereas Hankey may have correctly grasped the purpose of the plaques at Mycenae, there are various objections to be made against a direct link between the import of rare faience plaques at Mycenae, and the arrival of a large quantity of Mycenaean pottery at El Amarna.

Mycenaean pottery at Amarna

The corpus of Mycenaean pottery at Amarna represents the first large collection of Mycenaean artefacts found in Egypt. The corpus comprises approximately 2000 sherds, thought to represent some 600 pots.²⁰ The vast majority of these pots were of closed shape; mainly pilgrim flasks and stirrup jars. As has been noted above, Mycenaean pottery prior to the Amarna period has only been found at a handful of sites, and in very small quantities: some LH IIA/LM IB pottery has been found at Saqqara, Abydos and Dra' Abu el-Naga, while LH IIB pottery was found at Saqqara, Memphis, Kahun, Gurob, Gurnah and at Malqata.²¹ These sporadic occurrences of Mycenaean pots in Egypt are probably best explained as the result of exchange, probably brought to Egypt by Cypriote or Levantine traders. The corpus at Amarna is, however, clearly of a different nature — if only because of its unprecedented size. Amarna really marks the advent of the Mycenaean world in the Egyptian archaeological record, after which Mycenaean pottery is found at sites throughout Egypt until the end of the 12th century BC.

The bulk of Mycenaean pottery at El Amarna has been found in the Central City.²² By far the majority (over 1300 fragments) was found in large rubbish heaps, to the east of the police barracks and the offices of the royal scribes (also known as the Record Office). Theoretically at least, this pottery originally could have come from any part of the Central City, but analysis of the contents of the waste heaps seems to indicate that the waste (mainly) came from the scribes' offices. Smaller quantities of Mycenaean pottery have been found elsewhere in the Central City, including the magazines, the military and police quarters, the Royal Estate and the Great Palace. Notably, no fragments of Mycenaean pottery have been found in the Great Aton Temple or its dependencies, or in the small Aton Temple.

The southern suburb has yielded a small number of fragments of Mycenaean pottery, but to the author's knowledge, this was not more than approximately 15 sherds. A slightly larger

²⁰ Although Petrie's estimate is generally adopted in publications referring to the Amarna corpus (Cf. Podzuweit, below), Vronwy Hankey thought that the sherds only represented some 200 to 300 pots (unpublished letter V. Hankey to C. Morris, 4 July 1984, now in the Vronwy Hankey Collection, Archive of the British School at Athens).

²¹ V. Hankey, "Pottery as Evidence for Trade: Egypt", in C. Zerner /P. Zerner / J. Wider (eds.), *Wace and Blegen, Pottery as Evidence for Trade in the Aegean Bronze Age*, Amsterdam, 1993, 114; V. Hankey, "The Aegean Interest in El Amarna", *Journal of Mediterranean Anthropology and Archaeology* 1 (1981), 46. Malqata itself has yielded little, if any, well documented Mycenaean pottery (a Mycenaean cup attributed to Malqata [W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens und Vorderasiens zur Ägäis bis ins 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Darmstadt, 1979, 91] in effect probably was found at nearby Dira Abu el-Naga [F. von Bissing, "Funde und Erwerbungen in und aus Ägypten 1897-1898/99", *Archäologische Anzeiger* 14 (1899), 57]), but Mycenaean pottery has been found just south of and contemporary with Malqata (B. Kemp, "A building of Amenophis III at Kôm el-'Abd", *JEA* 63, 1977, 75).

²² Cf. W. Petrie, *Tell el Amarna*, London, 1894; see also V. Hankey, "The Aegean Interest in El Amarna", *Journal of Mediterranean Anthropology and Archaeology* 1 (1981), 45-6.

number of fragments of Mycenaean pottery have been found in the northern suburb, but there too, the total amount is modest. The Royal Palace in the North City may have yielded a small amount of Mycenaean pottery (a distribution map of the City used by Vronwy Hankey in a 1981 lecture seems to indicate this), but there are no references in the excavation reports to corroborate this. Mycenaean pottery then, seems to have been used — to whichever end — in the administrative and ritual heart of Amarna-Age Egypt: the Central City of Akhetaten. Its distribution in the surrounding districts seems markedly limited. As a consequence, it appears that Mycenaean pottery at Amarna was closely associated with court display. Elsewhere in Egypt and in other (later) periods, Mycenaean pottery may have been used more widely, as has been argued by Martha Bell, although her argument — based on the observation that the workmen’s village of Deir el Medina had access to approximately 120 vessels of LH IIIA2 and LH IIIB style-²³ ignores the points that these vessels may have been imported to the village over the course of more than a century (as opposed to the 600 vessels or more thought to be presented in the Amarna corpus — which were imported in less than 20 years) and that precisely Deir el Medina (the home of the workmen constructing the tombs of the Kings and Queens) seems closely related to (funerary) court display.

The question remains why the Egyptian court was interested in importing Mycenaean pottery. In another article, I have argued that the sudden appearance of a large number of Mycenaean pots (which are generally understood as containers for olive oil) at El Amarna may be plausibly linked to the equally sudden, contemporary appearance of the olive in the Egyptian archaeological record.²⁴ Whereas remains of olives have only sporadically been found in strata prior to the reign of Akhenaten²⁵, the olive is omnipresent in the Amarna Age: next to a full grown olive tree, an olive twig is depicted as an offering to the Sun on the wall of the Great Aton temple, wreaths of olive twigs covered the sarcophagus of Tutankhamen, whereas a similar wreath was found in a house at Akhetaten’s Central City. The omnipresence of the olive at Amarna suggests that from the reign of Akhenaton onwards, the olive became a familiar part of Egyptian life, and it is plausible that Egyptian contacts with the Mycenaean world during the Amarna Age may well have provided the incentive for the installation of the first olive groves in Egypt.²⁶

²³ Cf. M. Bell, “Preliminary Report on the Mycenaean Pottery from Deir el-Medina (1979-1980)”, *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l’Égypte* 68 (1982), 13-163. Since Deir el Medina was deserted during the reign of Akhenaton, it seems most plausible to ascribe the LH IIIA2 material at that site to the reign of Tutankhamen, and perhaps Aye and Horemheb. The LH IIIB material may have been imported over the course of the 19th dynasty. See also Hankey 1993.

²⁴ J. Kelder, “Royal Gift Exchange between Mycenae and Egypt: Olives as greeting gifts in the LBA eastern Mediterranean”, *AJA* 113.3 (2009), 339-352.

²⁵ Some of the oldest olive remains found in Egypt are thought to have come from the Levant; they have been found in 13th-Dynasty levels at Kom el-Rabi’a (Memphis; Cf. M.A Murray, “Fruits, Vegetables, Pulses and Condiments”, in P. Nicholson and I. Shaw (eds.) *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge 2000, 610) and, dating to the Late Second Intermediate Period, at Avaris in the eastern delta. An even older piece of olive wood has recently been found at Giza during the AERA excavations (published on the AERA website, November 2009: http://www.aeraweb.org/aeranews_olive.asp). The presence of olive wood charcoal, amongst Levantine plant remains may indicate that olives, at least sporadically, made their way from the Levant to Egypt already during the heydays of the Old Kingdom. It has been proposed that olives, though in limited number, may have been grown in Egypt at that time, and that olive oil was perhaps stored —mirroring Levantine practice- in combed ware vessels.

²⁶ Hitherto this, the earliest evidence for the installation of olive groves within Egypt came from jar-dockets from Deir el Medina, dating to the reign of Ramesses II (Cf. P. Tallet, “Les circuits économiques”, in G. Andreu (ed.), *Deir el Medineh et la Vallée des Rois*, Paris, 2003, 265-269; M. Bell, “Preliminary Report on the Mycenaean

Contact between pre-Amarna Age Egypt and Mycenae

The Egyptian interest in the Aegean may thus primarily have been of an economic nature: the wish to obtain a commodity (olives / olive oil) that was difficult to obtain in sufficient quantities from regions within the Egyptian Empire itself. The problem is that olives were actually grown within the Egyptian Empire, in the Levant, and one would expect the Egyptians to have obtained olive and olive oil primarily from that region. Indeed, there is evidence that the olive was already used during Chalcolithic times, and it has been argued that the fruit was domesticated during the Early Bronze Age,²⁷ but there is little evidence that the Egyptians ever acquired large quantities of olives or olive oil from the Levant. Why then, was there such an apparent interest in *Mycenaean* olive oil?

There is good evidence that at least some of the Mycenaean palaces specialized in the production of perfumed oil, no doubt in part destined for foreign markets,²⁸ and there can be little doubt that the Mycenaean pots at Amarna were part of an exchange of greeting gifts. Chemical analysis of the sherds suggests that the pots were made in the Argolid (the Mycenaean centre at Berbati appears to be a good option)²⁹ whereas one would expect a more diverse chemical composition had the pottery been imported via middlemen. The fact that the decorations and shapes (mostly closed shapes; pilgrim flasks and stirrup jars) of the pots all fall within the stylistic phase of LH IIIA2 adds to the sense of homogeneity.³⁰ Moreover, the context of the vast majority of the pottery at Amarna, in the waste heaps in the Central City, closely link the pottery to the day-to-day activities of the royal court and thus would be easiest explained as the result of international diplomacy.

Yet despite that, the corpus of Mycenaean pottery at Amarna cannot be seen as a direct result of Amenhotep III's overtures to the ruler of Mycenae. Since Akhenaten moved his capital to Amarna during the 6th year of his reign, one would expect Amenhotep's mission to have long since returned to Thebes.³¹ If Mycenaean pottery had played a role in the Egyptian-

Pottery from Deir el-Medina (1979-1980)", *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 68 (1982), 143-163. The depiction of an olive twig as an offering to the Aton on the wall of the Great Aton temple, and the use of olive twigs in (funerary) wreaths seems to indicate the availability of "fresh" olive twigs, which in turn argues for olive groves in Egypt. The introduction of the olive in Egypt could, as a result of these new considerations, plausibly be placed in the 14th century BC.

²⁷ Cf. E. Galili / D. J. Stanley / J. Sharvit / M. Weinstein-Evron, "Evidence for the first Olive-oil production in submerged Settlements off the Carmel Coast, Israel", *Journal of Archaeological Science* 24/12 (1997), 1141-1150; D. Zohary / M. Hopf, *Domestication of Plants in the Old World* (3d edition), Oxford, 2000, 149.

²⁸ Cf. C. Shelmerdine, "The Perfumed Oil Industry at Pylos", in C. Shelmerdine / T. Palaima (eds.), *Pylos Comes Alive*, New York, 1984, 81-95.

²⁹ Chr. Podzuweit, "Bemerkungen zur mykenischen Keramik von Tell el-Amarna", in *Festschrift für Otto Frey zum 65. Geburtstag*, Marburg, 1994, 157.

³⁰ Although the vast majority of the Amarna corpus is LH IIIA2, it has been suggested that 2 pieces may be dated to LH IIIB1 (P. Warren / V. Hankey, *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology*, Bristol, 1989, 149-151). This identification has not gone without discussion. At least one of the identifications (the piece from the University College London collection) has not generally been accepted as LH IIIB (it may be FS 166 or 178 -which could well be LH IIIA2), while the lozenge pattern on the fragment from the Bonn collection -which seems to make it LH IIIB- is also attested (if sporadically) in LH IIIA2. Cf. Elizabeth French / Penelope Mountjoy quoted in M. Wiener, "The Absolute Chronology of Late Helladic IIIA2", in M. S. Balmuth / R. H. Tykot (eds.), *Sardinian and Aegean Chronology*, Oxford, 1998: 312. See also E. French, "Late Helladic IIIA2 Pottery from Mycenae", *BSA* 60 (1965), 159-202.

³¹ Even if one argues that messengers could sometimes be detained for several years, as is indicated in one of the Amarna letters, the objection remains that on their return voyage to Thebes, the messengers would have certainly heard of the old King's death and of Akhenaten's move to Amarna. Moreover, on their way to Thebes, the messengers would have actually passed the newly built capital -and would have stopped there.

Mycenaean connection prior to Amarna, it would have been found there; in the tombs, in the temples, and most of all at Amenhotep III's palace at Malqata. Yet no piece of Mycenaean pottery, whether LH IIIA1 (corresponding with the reign of Amenhotep III) or LH IIIA2 has been found.

The combination of archaeology and textual evidence now allows for the identification of at least three separate diplomatic missions between Mycenae and the Egyptian court. The impetus for diplomatic connections came, according to the (Egyptian) texts, from Mycenae, with the arrival of messengers from the King of Tanaju at the court of Thutmosis III. The Annals of Thutmosis III indicated that the first messengers from Tanaju brought precious metal vessels, which is paralleled by contemporary depictions on the walls of the tombs of the nobles at Thebes of messengers from Keftiu bringing metal vessels to the Egyptian court.³² The paucity of Mycenaean LH II and IIIA1 pottery in Egypt, as a result, should not be understood as evidence against direct Mycenaean contact with Egypt, but quite the reverse: by bringing precious metal vessels, the first messengers from Tanaju demonstrated an awareness of international diplomatic *mores*. Mycenaean pottery, prior to the Amarna era, apparently was of no importance in the connections between Egypt and Mycenae.

Mycenaeans in Egypt?

We have observed above that, while there had been Egypto-Mycenaean contacts before the reign of Akhenaton, the Mycenaean world truly enters the archaeological record during the Amarna period. During that period, Mycenae appear to have been closely related to court display –olives are depicted on the wall of the Aton temple, Mycenaean vases are used *en masse* in the palace quarter (the Central City), while a Mycenaean vase and a papyrus depicting Mycenaean warriors were found in association with utensils for a royal cult. After Amarna, Mycenaean objects, mainly pots, are found relatively frequently throughout Egypt, mostly in modest quantities, although some sites have yielded larger numbers of Mycenaean imports. Most prominent are Deir el Medina and Pi-ramesse.

Despite claims to the contrary, the distribution of Mycenaean pottery in Egypt suggests that Mycenaean pots remained prestigious products even after the Amarna period, although the degree of diffusion to social echelons not directly connected to the court may have increased.³³

³² Many of these depictions include “hybrid shapes”, with clear Aegean shapes but including a number of Levantine and Egyptian features. The presence of these hybrids has taken as evidence against the historicity of the Theban wall paintings (Cf. S. Wachsmann, *Aegeans in the Theban Tombs*, Leuven, 1987, 49 ff.) but a recent study by Marion Feldman (*Diplomacy by Design*, Baltimore, 2006) indicates that hybrids formed a vital –and very real– part of interstate diplomatic gift exchange, tying the various elites in the eastern Mediterranean with a range of symbols widely recognized and understood.

³³ Even at Amarna, some sherds were found in squatters' dwellings, while some pottery at for example Buhen has been found in local tombs –on one occasion together with an Egyptian imitation stirrup jar (Tomb H80). According to the first excavators of Buhen (D. Randall-Maciver / C. Leonard Wooly, *Buhen*, Philadelphia, 1911, 132), “Mycenaean stirrup jars at Buhen were of fairly common occurrence.” Although this fairly common occurrence is regrettably not specified in the excavation reports, later excavations by W. B. Emery, H. S. Smith and A. Milard (*The Fortress of Buhen, the Archaeological Report*, London, 1979) yielded another 7 or so pots, 5 of which were stirrup jars, 1 pilgrims flask and 1 sherd from a closed shaped vessel. Considering that all of these vases came from an 18th dynasty cemetery, it is reasonable to assume that we are dealing with LH IIIA2 pottery here, possibly with a little bit of earlier material (although, considering the scarcity of this material in Egypt itself, this seems unlikely). At both Buhen and Amarna, the amounts are small and in the case of Buhen, may have been sent as provisions to the local contingent occupying the fortress (and as such should be considered in the light of the interest

Regardless of these details, the Egyptian interest in Mycenaean pottery must have remained the same. Closed shapes prevail and even at Pi-ramesse, where the corpus includes a number of rare shapes (including rhyta, kraters and kylikes), pilgrim flasks and stirrup jars constitute the majority of Mycenaean imports. Consequently, it appears likely that those vessels were imported primarily for their contents; most likely olive oil (whether perfumed or not). Even if olives were grown in Egypt from the Amarna period onwards, the arid climate of the country never allowed for large scale exploitation: Egypt never produced enough oil to cover even its basic demands — a situation that persisted well into the Classical era. The question is what these “basic demands” entailed: to what end was olive oil used in the Pharaonic state?

In the case of perfumed olive oil, there can be little doubt that the oil was used primarily for ceremonies; ritual festivals or, more generally, royal display. However, whereas small pilgrim flasks may plausibly be interpreted as vessels for unguents, a number of the stirrup jars found in Egypt are too coarse and/or too large to have been containers for perfumed oil.³⁴ Rather, these vessels may have contained non-perfumed olive oil. Non-perfumed olive oil may have been used for a variety of purposes, but Egyptian sources are, in this respect, rather silent. There is the possibility that olive oil was used for cooking: olives (the whole fruits) are mentioned as part of the rations distributed to the King’s standard bearer and the King’s messenger during the reign of Seti I.³⁵ The fact that Mycenaean vessels have also been found in tombs, often close to the body, inside the coffin, or in toilette boxes and baskets, suggests that (perfumed?) olive oil may also have served some ritual or funerary purpose.³⁶ During the

of the Pharaonic administration, rather than local exchange). Post Amarna pottery at Saqqara has exclusively been found in the tombs of the country’s ruling elite (Cf. P. Warren / V. Hankey, *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology*, Bristol, 1989, 152; G. Martin, “The EES-Leiden Saqqara Expedition, 1996”, *JEA* 82, 1996, 6; D. Aston / B. Aston: “Section H: The Pottery”, in G. T. Martin (ed.), *The Tombs of three Memphite Officials; Ramose, Khay and Pabes*, London, 2001, 56-60; V. Hankey / D. Aston, “Mycenaean Pottery at Saqqara: Finds from Excavations by the Egypt Exploration Society of London and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, 1975-1990”, in J. B. Carter / S. P. Morris (eds.), *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*, Austin, 1995, 67-92; D. Aston, “The Pottery”, in Aston, D. / Raven, M. / Martin, G. “The Tomb-chambers of Iurudet”, *JEA* 72, 1986, 21). Only during Ramesside times, there is evidence for a more widespread distribution of Mycenaean pottery in the hinterland of Pi-ramesse, although it remains unclear in what context these scattered sherds should be considered (Cf. E. van den Brink: “A Geo-archaeological Survey in the Eastern Delta”, *MDAIK* 43, 1987, 14). The increased diffusion of Mycenaean pottery, hitherto an essentially a royal commodity, through lower strata of society after the Amarna period (i.e. during the 19th dynasty) is paralleled by the loss of exclusiveness of a number of prestigious goods and activities, including the manufacture of glass and the participation in religious ceremonies.

³⁴ Petrie and Brunton (*Sedment II*, London, 1924, Pl. LIX 5) show one fragment of a coarse stirrup jar (see also J. Raison, *Les vases à inscriptions peintes de l’âge mycénien et leur context archéologique*, Rome, 1968, 35, n.127) and Pendlebury identified two sherds at El Amarna (*The City of Akhetaten III*, London, 1951, 237, 238, Pl. CIX 4.222; but see V. Hankey, “The Aegean Deposit at El Amarna”, in V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium. ‘The Mycenaean in the Eastern Mediterranean’*, 129). M. Bell (*Deir el Medineh*, in *Bulletin de Liaison du Groupe International d’Étude de la Céramique Égyptienne* 4, 1979, 10-11) reported a fragment from Deir el Medina. Another example is mentioned in J. Bourriau, *Umm El-Ga’ab: Pottery from the Nile Valley before the Arab Conquest*, Cambridge, 1981, 124-5, photo 125. It has been noted by Martha Bell (*Mycenaean Pottery from Egypt*, unpublished manuscript) that Aegean coarse ware may not have been identified as such (but mistaken for Egyptian coarse ware), which may explain the scarcity of these large storage vessels. Apart from these considerations, one must wonder whether *all* the rather simple and unattractive stirrup jars can plausibly be identified as containers for precious perfumes. To me, it seems that especially the stirrup jars may well have contained the non perfumed oil (whereas pilgrim flasks seem more appropriate as containers for perfumed oil).

³⁵ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Record of Egypt* (Vol. 3.), Chicago, 1906, 208.

³⁶ Various oils and resins were interred with deceased rulers from the first dynasties onwards, as part of a standard royal burial equipment. Olive oil has not been attested amongst those, but may have been added during the New Kingdom. Alternatively, the Mycenaean pots in Egyptian tombs may reflect the use of olive oil in cosmetics.

reign of Ramesses III, olive groves were installed at Heliopolis “to fuel the lamps in the temples of Egypt”, which indicates that olive oil was used as fuel, too.³⁷ In addition, it has been argued on the basis of large quantities of stirrup jars found at Qantir, in what once were the royal stables of Pi-ramesse, that olive oil was used “for the horses themselves, either for the harness or on their manes and tails”.³⁸ This interpretation might find some support in Linear B texts referring to “Salböl für Gewänder”.³⁹ In sum, olive oil may have been used for a wide variety of purposes, quite probably in combination with various other types of oil (including linseed oil, which was produced in Egypt itself).

With such a wide range of uses, and the inability to grow sufficient olives within Egypt itself, it is hardly a surprise that Mycenaean containers for olive oil, pilgrim flasks and stirrup jars, are found in large quantities at those major sites that have been — or are- properly excavated: El Amarna and Qantir / Pi-ramesse. The relatively large corpus found in the tombs of the courtiers of the late 18th-early 19th dynasty at Saqqara suggests that Mycenaean pottery was equally common at nearby Memphis (which, as a result of rising groundwater and later activity, could not be extensively excavated).⁴⁰ Smaller quantities of Mycenaean pottery elsewhere, at Buhen, Kahun / Lahun, Sedment, Gurob and Deir el Medina, suggest that Mycenaean pottery did reach the provinces, but in limited amounts — and that it usually was only available to local elites or groups with a direct connection to the court.⁴¹ In all of these cases, the Mycenaean pots were of closed shapes: from Amarna onwards usually pilgrim flasks and stirrup jars, while the few pieces before that period predominantly are of closed shape, too (alabastron-shaped jars [FS82], pyxis [FS92], pithoid jar [FS21], squat, one-handled jar [FS87]).⁴²

The real surprise thus should not be that Qantir and Amarna yielded so many sherds of closed shaped vessels, but rather that these two sites yielded a (small) number of open shapes. The only plausible explanation for the presence of open shapes at Amarna seems to be that there must have been some demand for those shapes. The question arises whether the native Egyptians can be held accountable for that demand. This question is difficult to address, but considering the overall scarcity of open shaped Mycenaean ware elsewhere in Egypt, it appears unlikely that Mycenaean kylikes [FS257], bowls [FS283], and cups [FS208, 220, 221] found at Amarna, and the even wider range of shapes (possibly even including a pegtop rhyton) at Qantir, were used by Egyptians.

If these vessels were not used by Egyptians, Mycenaean seem to be the most likely people that did. It is in this respect striking that precisely at the two centres where Mycenaean pottery with open shapes has been found, physical Mycenaean presence is suggested —

³⁷ J. H. Breasted, *Ancient Record of Egypt* (Vol. 3, §239, 241; Vol. 4, §236), Chicago, 1906.

³⁸ Cf. P. A. Mountjoy / H. Mommsen, “Mycenaean Pottery from Qantir-Piramesse, Egypt”, *BSA* 96 (2001), 124.

³⁹ In this case to the deity *u-po-jo po-ti-ni-ja* (PY Fr.1225; J. Weilharter, *Mykenische Opfergaben nach Aussage der Linear B-Texte*, Vienna, 2005, 225).

⁴⁰ See above, note 30.

⁴¹ Cf. for Kahun / Lahun: V. Hankey / O. Tufnell, “The Tomb of Maket and its Mycenaean Import”, *BSA* 68 (1973), 109-110; for Sedment: F. Petrie / G. Brunton, *Sedment II*, London, 1924, 23, Pls. XLVIII 1, LIX 59, LXV 79c; for Gurob: G. Brunton / R. Engelbach, *Gurob*, London, 1927, 9, Pls. XXIX 39, XXX 79b, XIII 4, (note the faience imitation of a stirrup jar; 12, Pl. XXV 4). For Deir el Medina and Buhen, see above.

⁴² Cf. V. Hankey / P. Warren, “The Absolute Chronology of the Aegean Late Bronze Age”, *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies* 21 (1974), 146-7; R. Merrillees, “The Cypriote Bronze Age Pottery found in Egypt”, *Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology* 18 (1968), 22, 195.

although by no means proven- by other evidence: the Amarna papyrus and the piece of boar's tusk at Qantir. Indeed, Pendlebury thought that Mycenaeans had lived at Akhetaten, and dubbed a house (T.36.36) in the north suburb the "house of the Mycenaean Greek". The street on which it lay was called the Greek street, because of a (small) concentration of Mycenaean pottery found there. Pendlebury supported his view with reference to Aegean influence on the architecture of the house (most notably what was described as a light well) and on furniture and small finds (including a piece of a Mycenaean goblet) found there.⁴³ Although the idea has not found universal acceptance and only sporadically entered archaeological discourse,⁴⁴ the identification of Mycenaeans on the papyrus from Amarna forces us to reconsider this idea. It now appears rather likely that at Mycenaeans lived and worked at Amarna, where they may have worked in the Egyptian military (as the papyrus indicates).⁴⁵ Similarly, they may have followed in the footsteps of the Minoans, working as craftsmen in the small arts, such as fresco painting (there is strong Aegean influence in wall paintings at both Malqata and Amarna), or perhaps metalworking.⁴⁶ In a similar fashion, the sudden surge of woollen textiles at Amarna may well have been Aegean-inspired.⁴⁷

Post Amarna contacts

There is every suggestion that connections between Egypt and the Mycenaean world remained strong after the Amarna period, perhaps at the expense of Cypriote trade with the Nilotic Kingdom. While Cypriote imports seem to have decreased from Amarna onwards,⁴⁸ Mycenaean pottery is found throughout Egypt, although larger concentrations appear restricted to important administrative centres (Pi-ramesse and, perhaps, Memphis; see above). Indeed,

⁴³ J. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhetaten III*, London, 1951, 237; J. Pendlebury, "Preliminary Report of Excavations at Tell el 'Amarnah 1930-1", *JEA* 17 (1931), 233-244; H. Frankfort / J. Pendlebury, *The City of Akhetaten II*, London, 1933, 44-46.

⁴⁴ R. Merrilllees, "Mycenaean Pottery from the Time of Akhenaten in Egypt", *Acts of the International Symposium "The Mycenaeans in the Eastern Mediterranean"*, Nicosia, 1973, 175-186.

⁴⁵ Indeed, it has been suggested that Mycenaean presence in Pharaoh's armies might date back to even earlier times; if not physically then at least in the mind. A depiction of a type of (scaled) body armor in the tomb of Qenamun has been compared to the so-called Dendra cuirass – a bronze armour found at the village of Dendra in the Argolid. Cf. J. C. Darnell and C. Manassa, *Tutankhamun's armies: Battle and Conquest during Egypt's late Eighteenth Dynasty*, Hoboken (New Jersey), 2007, 82. For the Dendra Cuirass: P. Astrom, *The Cuirass Tomb and other Finds at Dendra*, Göteborg 1977.

⁴⁶ Cf. V. Hankey, "The Whirligig of Time: The Aegean and Egypt in the Second Millenium B.C.", in A. Leahy / J. Tait (eds.), *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H.S. Smith*, London, 1999. The axe and dagger in the tomb of Ahotep indisputably show Aegean influence, and may have been made by Minoan craftsmen in Egypt. Note that these objects, with their mixture of Aegean and Egyptian motives, conform well to the "international koine" of the eastern Mediterranean elites, as explored in Feldman's study (see above). During the Amarna period, Aegean influence in Egyptian metalwork is difficult to assess, but the inlay with glass-paste in the sarcophagus of Smenkhare (?), at the Cairo Museum, strongly reminded me of the inlay of a dagger found (admittedly centuries earlier) in the shaft graves of Mycenae.

⁴⁷ Sheep's wool had been known from predynastic times onwards (W. Petrie and J. E. Quibell [*Naqada and Ballas*, London, 1895, 44] mention wool at Naqada), but is only sporadically attested during the Old and Middle Kingdom. At Amarna, woollen textiles have been found in the Central City and the Workmen's Village. Cf. G. Vogelsang-Eastwood, "Textiles", in P. T. Nicholson / I. Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge, 2000, 269. In this respect, it may be of some interest to note that of the two attestations of Egyptians in Linear B texts, one (an Egyptian in the Archive at Knossos; Db 1105, X 1446) appears to have been a shepherd (Cf. E. Cline, *Sailing the Wine Dark Sea*, Oxford, 1994, 128).

⁴⁸ Cf. R. Merrilllees, *The Cypriote Bronze Age Pottery Found in Egypt*, Lund, 1968, 186, 202.

from Amarna onwards, stirrup jars appear to have been copied by Egyptian potters. Faience imitations have been found at Buhen (see note 33) and Gurob (it has been proposed that Gurob was the centre of manufacture)⁴⁹, whereas a number of alabaster stirrup jars are also known.⁵⁰ Stirrup jars in Egyptian marl clay have been found at Deir el Medina, while a similar piece is in the collection of the museum in Bonn (Germany).⁵¹ Considering the likelihood of Mycenaean settlers in Egypt from the Amarna period onwards, some of these copies may, perhaps, have been made by Mycenaean potters in Egypt. We can only guess what was stored in these vessels, but Egyptian olive oil (perhaps perfumed?) seems, considering the above, a reasonable option.

The presence of Mycenaean vessels in the tombs of high courtiers at Saqqara, including what has been identified as the tomb of a Ramesside princess, suggests that true Mycenaean imports remained prized possessions.⁵² As has been noted above, Mycenaean pottery was still imported during the reign of Ramesses II, when a wide range of shapes — though stirrup jars still dominate the corpus — were used at Pi-ramesse. As has been argued above, the occurrence of a piece of boar's tusk, doubtless from a Mycenaean type helmet, found at Qantir, in combination with the wide variety of Mycenaean pottery shapes at that site, suggests that connections between Mycenae and Egypt included not only the exchange of goods, but also of men. The boar's tusk suggests that Mycenaean soldiers may still have been serving in the Egyptian army.

As has been observed above, the concentration of Mycenaean pottery in the area of the royal stables might suggest that Mycenaean olive oil was used on the horses or their equipment, a suggestion strengthened by the occurrence of an incised horse-head, tentatively identified as a Linear B sign (!), on a Mycenaean sherd found in that same area.⁵³ The Mycenaean soldiers were certainly familiar with, and perhaps even known for, chariots: references to horse-rearing Argos in the *Iliad* and the depictions of charioteers on Mycenaean kraters and frescoes indicate the high status of horses and chariotry in the Mycenaean world. The recent discovery on the Greek island of Salamis of a bronze lamella, stamped with the cartouche of Ramesses II, was part of just the type of armour worn by Near Eastern charioteers, and may have been brought back by a Mycenaean veteran from Pharaoh's military.⁵⁴

Connections between New Kingdom Egypt and Mycenae, in sum, appear to have been of a rather close nature, involving not only the exchange of goods, but also the exchange of men, and of ideas.

⁴⁹ E. Peltenburg / H. McKerrel, "The Glazed Vases (Including a Polychrome Rhyton)" in V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Excavations at Kition 1: The Tombs*, Nicosia, 1974, 114; E. Peltenburg, "The faience Vases from Tombs 1 and 2 at Hala Sultan Tekke", in P. Aström / D. M. Bailey / V. Karageorghis (eds.), *Hala Sultan Tekke I*, Göteborg, 1976, 108.

⁵⁰ W. Petrie, *Illahun, Kahun and Gurob: 1889-1890*, London, 1891, 18 Pl. XIX 27

⁵¹ M. Bell, *Mycenaean Pottery from Egypt*, unpublished manuscript; B. Kaiser, *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Deutschland 40: Akkademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn 2*, Munich, 1976, 120-1, Pl. 40.6.

⁵² G. Martin, "Excavations at the Memphite Tomb of Horemheb: 1975 Preliminary Report", *JEA* 62 (1976), 13; V. Hankey / P. Warren, "The Absolute Chronology of the Aegean Late Bronze Age", *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies (University London)*, 1974, 148-150

⁵³ E. B. Pusch, "Vorbericht über die Abschlußkampagne am Grabungsplatz QIV 1997", *Ägypten und Levante IX* (1999), 29, Abb.3.

⁵⁴ Cf. Archaeological Report 2005-2006, 14, more extensively published on the internet: (March 27, 2006) http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=588&art_id=qw1143483300245G626.

References

- Aston, D. / Aston, B. 2011. "Section H: The Pottery", in G. T. Martin (ed.), *The Tombs of three Memphite Officials; Ramose, Khay and Pabes*, London, 50-60
- Aston, D. 1986. "The Pottery", in Aston, D. / Raven, M. / Martin, G. *The Tomb-chambers of Iurudef*, *JEA* 72, 15-22.
- Astrom, P. 1977. *The Cuirass Tomb and other Finds at Dendra*, Göteborg.
- Bell, M. 1982. "Preliminary Report on the Mycenaean Pottery from Deir el-Medina (1979-1980)", *Annales du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* 68, 142-163.
- Bell, M. 1979. "Deir el Medineh", *Bulletin de Liason du Groupe International d'Étude de la Céramique Égyptienne* 4, 10-11.
- Bietak, M. 2005. "The Thutmose Stronghold of Perunefer", *Egyptian Archaeology* 26, 13-27.
- Bietak, M. 1996. Le début de la XVIIIe dynastie et les Minoëns à Avaris, *Bulletin de la Société française d'Égyptologie* 135, 5-29.
- Bissing, F. von. 1899. Funde und Erwerbungen in und aus Ägypten 1897-1898/99, *Archäologische Anzeiger* 14, 57.
- Bourriau, J. 1981. *Umm El-Ga'ab: Pottery from the Nile Valley before the Arab Conquest*, Cambridge.
- Breasted, J. H. 1906. *Ancient Record of Egypt* (Vol. 3.), Chicago.
- Brink, E. van den. 1987. "A Geo-archaeological Survey in the Eastern Delta", *MDAIK* 43, 14.
- Brunton, G. / Engelbach, R. 1927. *Gurob*, London.
- Cline, E. 1994. *Sailing the Wine Dark Sea*, Oxford.
- Cline, E. 1990. "An unpublished Amenhotep III faience plaque from Mycenae", *JAOS* 110, 200-212.
- Darnell, J. C. / Manassa, C. 2007. *Tutankhamun's armies: Battle and Conquest during Egypt's late Eighteenth Dynasty*, Hoboken (New Jersey).
- Emery, W. B. / Smith, H. S. / Milard, A. 1979. *The Fortress of Buhen, The Archaeological Report*, London.
- Frankfort, H. / Pendlebury, J. D. S. 1933. *The City of Akhetaten II*, London.
- French, E. 1965. "Late Helladic IIIA2 Pottery from Mycenae", *Annual of the British School at Athens* (= BSA) 60, 159-202.
- Götze, A. 1986. *Madduwattas*, Darmstadt.
- Feldman, M. 2006. *Diplomacy by Design*, Baltimore.
- Galili, E. / Stanley, D. J. / Sharvit, J. / Weinstein-Evron, M. 1997. "Evidence for the first Olive-oil production in submerged Settlements off the Carmel Coast, Israel", *Journal of Archaeological Science* 24/12, 1141-1150.
- Haider, P. 1996. "Menschenhandel zwischen dem ägyptischen Hof und der minoisch-mykenischen Welt? ", *Ägypten und Levante* 6, 137-156.
- Haider, P. 1990. "Ägäer in ägyptischen Diensten zwischen ca. 1550 und 1200 v.Chr.", *Laverna* 1, 18-49.
- Hankey, V. 1999. "The Whirligig of Time: The Aegean and Egypt in the Second Millenium B.C.", in A. Leahy / J. Tait (eds.), *Studies on Ancient Egypt in Honour of H.S. Smith*, London.
- Hankey, V. / Leonard jr., A. 1998. "Aegean LH I-II Pottery in the east: Who is the Potter, Pray, and who the Pot?", in: E. Cline / D. Harris-Cline (eds.), *The Aegean and the Orient in the second Millennium BC*. [Aegaeum 18], Liège, 29-37.
- Hankey, V. / Aston, D. 1995. "Mycenaean Pottery at Saqqara: Finds from Excavations by the Egypt Exploration Society of London and the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, 1975-1990", in: J. B. Carter / S. P. Morris (eds.), *The Ages of Homer: A Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule*, Austin, 67-92.
- Hankey, V. 1993. "Pottery as Evidence for Trade: Egypt", in: C. Zerner / P. Zerner / J. Wider (eds.), *Wace and Blegen, Pottery as Evidence for Trade in the Aegean Bronze Age*, Amsterdam, 109-115.
- Hankey, V. 1981. "The Aegean Interest in El Amarna", *Journal of Mediterranean Anthropology and Archaeology* 1, 38-49.
- Hankey, V. / Warren, P. 1974. "The Absolute Chronology of the Aegean Late Bronze Age", *Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies (University London)*, 142-152.
- Hankey, V. / Tufnell, O. 1973. "The Tomb of Maket and its Mycenaean Import", *BSA* 68, 109-110.

- Hankey, V. 1973. "The Aegean Deposit at El Amarna", in: V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Acts of the International Archaeological Symposium. 'The Mycenaean in the Eastern Mediterranean'*, 128-136.
- Helck, W. 1979. *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens und Vorderasiens zur Ägäis bis ins 7. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Darmstadt.
- Jánosi, P. 1992. "The Queens Ahhotep I & II and Egypt's Foreign Relations", *Journal of the Ancient Chronology Forum* 5, 99-105.
- Kaiser, B. 1976. *Corpus Vasorum Antiquorum, Deutschland 40: Akkademisches Kunstmuseum Bonn 2*, München.
- Kelder, J. 2009. "Royal Gift Exchange between Mycenae and Egypt: Olives as greeting gifts in the LBA eastern Mediterranean", *AJA* 113.3, 339-352.
- Kelder, J. 2008. "A Great King at Mycenae", *Palamedes, a Journal of Ancient History* 3, 49-74.
- Kelder, J. 2004-5. "The Chariots of Ahhiyawa", *Dacia* XLVIII-XLIX, 151-160.
- Kemp, B. 1977. "A Building of Amenophis III at Kôm el-'Abd", *JEA* 63, 75.
- Koehl, R. B. 1999. "The Creto-Mycenaean Earrings of Queen Nofretari", in: P. P. Betancourt / V. Karageorghis / R. Laffineur / W-D. Niemeier (eds.), *Meletemata* [Aegaeum 20], Liège, 421-425.
- Kozloff, A. P. 1977. "A New Interpretation of an Old Amarna Enigma", *AJA* 81, 101-103.
- Martin, G. 1996. "The EES-Leiden Saqqara Expedition", *JEA* 82, 6-7.
- Martin, G. 1976. "Excavations at the Memphite Tomb of Horemheb: 1975 Preliminary Report", *JEA* 62, 5-13.
- Merrillees, R. 1973. "Mycenaean Pottery from the Time of Akhenaten in Egypt", in: Karageorghis, V (ed.), *Acts of the International Symposium 'The Mycenaean in the Eastern Mediterranean'*, Nicosia, 175-186.
- Merrillees, R. 1968. *The Cypriote Bronze Age Pottery found in Egypt* (Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology 18), Lund.
- Mountjoy, P. A. / Mommsen, H. 2001. "Mycenaean Pottery from Qantir-Piramesse, Egypt", *BSA* 96, 123-155.
- Murray, M. A. 2000. "Fruits, Vegetables, Pulses and Condiments", in: P. Nicholson and I. Shaw (eds.), *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge, 609-655.
- Niemeier, W-D. 2002. "Hattusa und Ahhiyawa im Konflikt um Millawanda/Milet", in: H. Willinghofer / U. Hasekamp (eds.), *Die Hethiter und ihr Reich; das Volk der 1000 Götter*, Stuttgart, 294-299.
- Peltenburg, E. 1976. "The faience Vases from Tombs 1 and 2 at Hala Sultan Tekke", in: P. Aström / D. M. Bailey / V. Karageorghis (eds.), *Hala Sultan Tekke I*, Göteborg, 108.
- Peltenburg, E. / McKerrel, H. 1974. "The Glazed Vases (Including a Polychrome Rhyton)", in: V. Karageorghis (ed.), *Excavations at Kition I: The Tombs*, Nicosia, 114.
- Pendlebury, J. D. S. 1951. *The City of Akhetaten III*, London.
- Pendlebury, J. D. S. 1931. "Preliminary Report of Excavations at Tell el 'Amarnah 1930-1", *JEA* 17, 233-244.
- Petrie W. F. / Brunton, G. 1924. *Sedment II*, London.
- Petrie, W. F. / Quibell, J. E. 1895. *Naqada and Ballas*, London.
- Petrie, W. F. 1894. *Tell el Amarna*, London.
- Petrie, W. F. 1891. *Illahun, Kahun and Gurob: 1889-1890*, London.
- Phillips, J. [in preparation] "Egypt and the Aegean", in: *Oxford Encyclopedia of Egyptology*.
- Phillips, J. 2008. Review of Y. Duhoux, Des minoens en Égypte?, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 65, 111-114.
- Phillips, J. 2007. "The Amenhotep III 'Plaques' from Mycenae: Comparison, Contrast and a Question of Chronology", in M. Bietak / E. Czerny (eds.), *The Synchronisation of Civilisations in the Eastern Mediterranean in the Second Millennium BC*, III, Wien, 479-494.
- Phillips, J. / Cline, E. 2005. "Amenhotep III and Mycenae: New Evidence", in: A. Dakouri-Hild / S. Sherratt (eds.), *Autochthon, Papers presented to O.T.P.K. Dickinson on the Occasion of his Retirement* [BAR int.ser. 1432], Oxford, 317-328.
- Podzuweit, Chr. 1994. "Bemerkungen zur mykenischen Keramik von Tell el-Amarna", in: *Festschrift für Otto Frey zum 65. Geburtstag*, Marburg, 457-474.
- Pusch, E. B. 1999. "Vorbericht über die Abschlusskampagne am Grabungsplatz QIV 1997", in: *Ägypten und Levante* IX, 17-37.
- Pusch, E. B. 1985. "Ausländisches Kulturgut in Qantir-Piramesse", in: S. Schoske (ed.), *Akten des 4. Internationalen Ägyptologenkongresses II*, München, 249-256.

- Raison, J. 1968. *Les vases à inscriptions peintes de l'âge mycénien et leur context archéologique*, Rome.
- Randall-Maciver, D. / Leonard Woolly, C. 1911. *Buhen*, Philadelphia.
- Shelmerdine, C. 1984. "The Perfumed Oil Industry at Pylos", in: C. Shelmerdine / T. Palaima (eds.), *Pylos Comes Alive*, New York, 81-95.
- Schofield, L. / Parkinson, R. B. 1994. "Mycenaean Warriors on a Papyrus from El-Amarna", *BSA* 89, 157-170.
- Schofield, L. / Parkinson, R. B. 1995. "Images of Mycenaean, a recently acquired Papyrus from El-Amarna", in: W. V. Davies / L. Schofield (eds.), *Egypt, the Aegean and the Levant*, London, 125-126.
- Tallet, P. 2003. "Les circuits économiques", in: G. Andreu (ed.), *Deir el Medineh et la Vallée des Rois*, Paris, 265-269.
- Vandersleyen, C. 2002. "Keftiou = Crète? Objections Préliminaires", *Göttinger Miszellen* 188, 109.
- Vogelsang-Eastwood, G. 2000. "Textiles", in: P. T. Nicholson / I. Shaw, *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, Cambridge, 269.
- Wachsmann, S. 1987. *Aegeans in the Theban Tombs*, Leuven.
- Warren, P. / Hankey, V. 1989. *Aegean Bronze Age Chronology*, Bristol.
- Weilhartner, J. 2005. *Mykenische Opfergaben nach Aussage der Linear B-Texte*, Vienna.
- Wiener, M. 1998. "The Absolute Chronology of Late Helladic IIIA2", in: M. S. Balmuth / R. H. Tykot (eds.), *Sardinian and Aegean Chronology*, Oxford, 309-319.
- Zohary, D. / Hopf, M. 2000. *Domestication of Plants in the Old World* (3d edition), Oxford.



Fig. 1: Mycenaean in Egypt (drawing by H. Hankey)